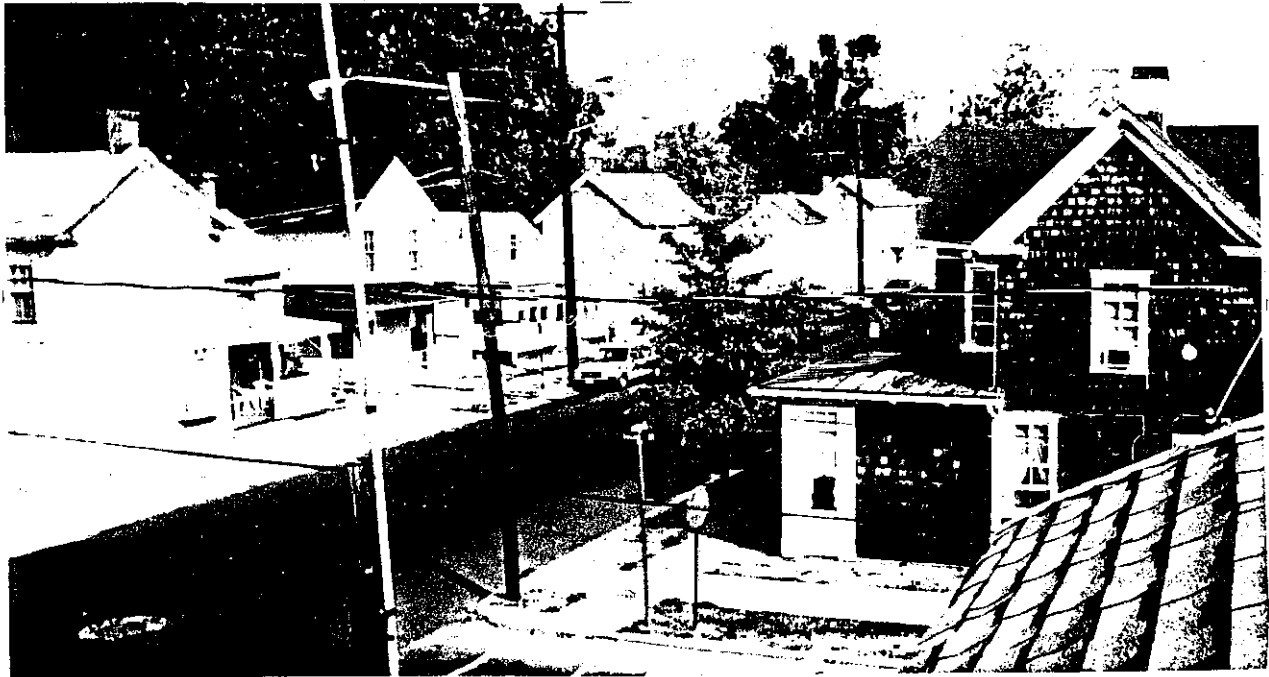


EAST END HOUSING
AND
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN



SEPTEMBER 1997

EAST END HOUSING
AND
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1997

INTRODUCTION

The East End Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Plan represents a new watershed for comprehensive planning in the Town of Easton. This Plan is the first to look comprehensively at a specific sub-region of the Town. In planning jargon such plans are referred to as Mini-Plans, Sub-Area Plans or Neighborhood Plans. They examine a wide-range of issues as is the case with the Comprehensive Plan for the Town. However, as the geographic area being examined is more confined, a much more detailed analysis can be made and recommendations can actually be tailored to small areas such as blocks or even individual parcels.

The Town of Easton is presently nearing the completion of a new Comprehensive Plan for the Town. One of the recommendations of this Plan is that Small-Area Plans be developed for a number of given locations. It endorses, by reference, a Plan for the Town Center prepared by a consultant in 1994. The East End Plan, one of the small-area plans recommended in the Comprehensive Plan, however, is the first to be prepared by Town staff as well as the first to look at a sub-area of the Town on a comprehensive basis.

Another factor leading to the preparation of this Plan at this time was the Town's desire to complete it's Graham's Alley Housing Project. This project was envisioned as a multi-phase endeavor. Phase I was Asbury Place, a 26-unit, low-income, elderly apartment project. It was completed in 1995. Phases II and III were envisioned as some combination of home-ownership and rental units. In order to facilitate the completion of the Project, the Town wanted a better understanding of the needs of the entire neighborhood. Therefore, as its required matching contribution for a State grant, the Town proposed to prepare this Plan.

The process by which the East End Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was produced was one in which members of the neighborhood were active participants. A series of meetings were held during which time a small but dedicated group of individuals interested in the East End worked to craft this document. There was little in the way of the more traditional planning method whereby the staff prepares and the citizens react. To the contrary this document is a collaborative effort between Town staff and East End residents. As such it is believed that the Plan more accurately reflects the desires of the neighborhood than may often be the case in Plans prepared in the more "traditional" method. It is also hoped that as a result of their active involvement in the drafting of this Plan, the neighborhood will be more involved in its implementation as well.

BACKGROUND

The East End Neighborhood consists of 115 acres located just east of the historic downtown area of Easton. The boundaries of this neighborhood are Goldsborough Street on the north, Park Street on the east, Brookletts Avenue on the south, and Hanson Street on the west. Map 1 graphically depicts these boundaries.

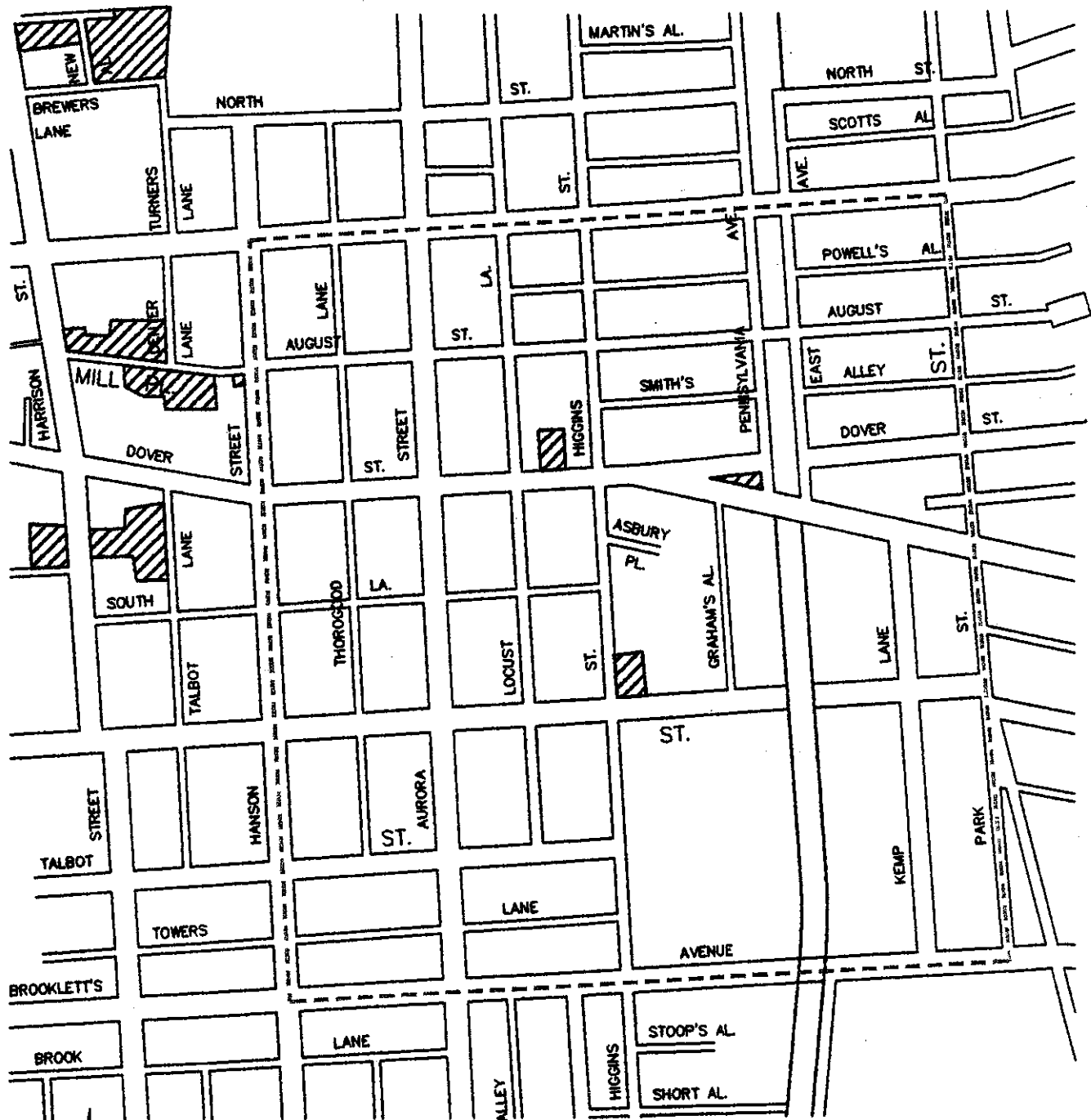
The East End Neighborhood has a long and colorful history. All of the neighborhood was either part of the original Town as defined in 1785, or was included as part of the second expansion of the corporate limits in 1880. Anecdotal history suggests that much of the East End was the home of the slave population for Easton proper prior to the Civil War. The masters of these slaves probably lived in the large homes like those along Harrison and Goldsborough Streets (in fact some of these are probably the very homes of these masters).

Many of the Churches in the East End have long and rich histories. Bethel African Episcopal Church dates back to 1818. The brick structure it now occupies was completed in 1877 and one of the first speakers in this new building was Frederick Douglass in 1878.

Following the Civil War, the railroad exerted a great influence on the East End. The trains have only relatively recently ceased to run to Easton, but the influence of this era still remains. In 1997 a new linear park will open along a portion of the former rail bed. This park, following the former rail line, passes by buildings that seem out of place unless one realizes that they were once on a thriving rail line. Thus uses like the grain elevators and some of the large warehousing-type facilities are not quite as out of place as they initially appear. This is not to suggest that they are appropriate today, only that they can be understood in light of the history of this neighborhood.

On a lighter historical note, the East End was the setting for the filming of a major motion picture in 1916. The film was "A Municipal Report" based on the story by O. Henry. Numerous locations in and around the East End Neighborhood, including the train station and cemetery, were used as settings for this movie.

One group with a keen and vested interest in this neighborhood is the East End Neighborhood Association. They have long been advocates for improving the East End by increased community policing, neighborhood business recruitment and retention, stricter livability and property maintenance code enforcement, development of parks, and provision of affordable housing.



TOWN OF EASTON
P.O. BOX 100
EASTON, MD 21821
410-325-2500



PREPARED BY
EASTON UTILITIES
200 WEST 1ST STREET, SUITE 100
EASTON, MD 21821

TOWN OF EASTON EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY

DESIGN: N/A	SCALE: 1" = 400'	DWG. NO.: 787024
DRAWN: H. LECATES	DATE: 3/19/97	
CHECKED: L. THOMAS	FILE NO.: N	SHEET 1 OF 3
APPROVED: T. HAMILTON	APPROVAL DATE: N	

CAD DRAWING—DO NOT MAKE MANUAL CHANGES TO THIS DRAWING

TABLE 2 - BUILDING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS		
CONDITION	RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS	NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS
Total Structures	315	60
Sound	206	50
Deteriorating	85	8
Dilapidated*	24	2
Breakdown (Percent)		
Sound	65%	83%
Deteriorating	27%	13%
Dilapidated*	8%	3%

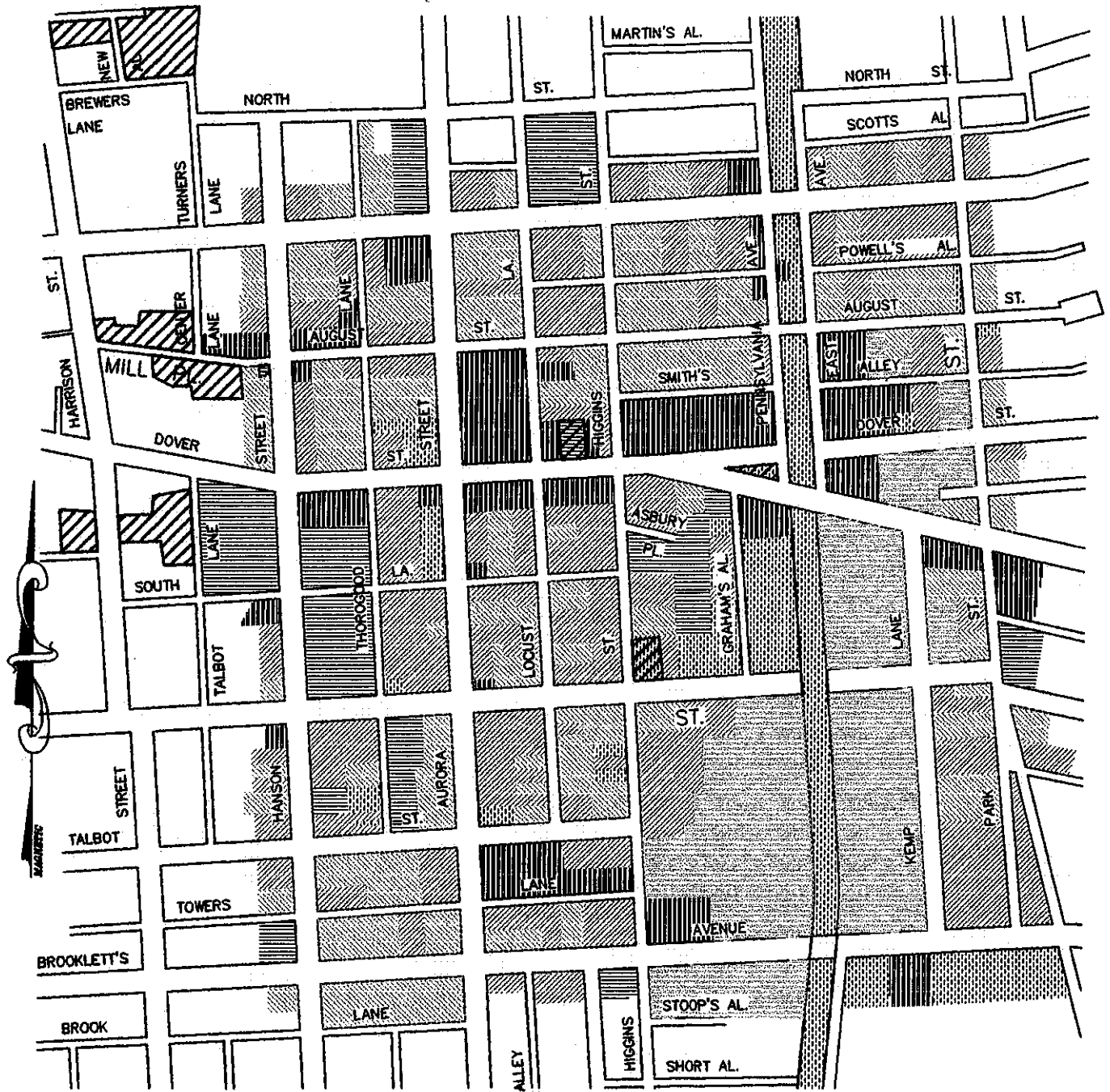
* In the case of non-residential structures the classification is "vacant".

Among other things, these tables point out:

- o The greatest amount of land was, at the time of the survey, consumed by roads and rights-of-way.
- o The predominate use of privately held land was single-family Detached housing.
- o Most structures were in sound condition, but alarmingly more than one out of every three residential buildings were classified as deteriorating or dilapidated.

As a part of the development of this Plan, members of the East End Neighborhood Association updated the land use aspect of this analysis. The results of this effort are graphically depicted on Map 2.

Map 2 indicates that, at least in terms of land use, the conditions as described in the Land Use and Housing Report are the same. Residential uses are the most dominant land use, although the proportion of rental units is higher than in most neighborhoods. There is a fair amount of commercially developed land in the neighborhood, although it is generally concentrated along Dover Street. Parks, Institutional Uses, and Industrial Uses are present but less prevalent. All in all, the East End seems to have a nice mix of land uses, something that is lacking in many neighborhoods throughout the country today. In short, at least in terms of the mix of land uses, the East End is the kind of neighborhood many places are striving to create as exemplified by such development concepts as "New Urbanism" and "Neotraditional Development" which are growing in popularity with many planning officials.



LEGEND

OWNER OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL

RENTAL OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

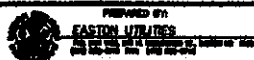
INDUSTRIAL

PARK/OPEN SPACE

INSTITUTIONAL



TOWN OF EASTON
P.O. BOX 200
EASTON, MD 21601
410-822-2020



TOWN OF EASTON EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD

EXISTING LAND USE PLAN

DSND:	N/A	SCALE:	1" = 400'	DWG. NO.:	797024
OWN:	H. LECATES	DATE:	3/21/97		
CHKD:	L. THOMAS	FILE NO.:	N/A	SHEET	2 OF 3
APPD:	T. HAMILTON	APPDATE:	3/21/97		

CAD DRAWING-DO NOT MAKE MANUAL CHANGES TO THIS DRAWING

In order to gain some insight into the demographic makeup of the East End neighborhood, data was obtained from the Maryland Office of Planning. This data is particularly useful because it is taken from the 1990 Census, but coincides directly and solely to the East End neighborhood. The following table summarizes this data and provides a comparison of the corresponding figures for the Town as a whole.

TABLE 3		
DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD		
CHARACTERISTIC	EAST END	EASTON
HOUSING UNITS		
TOTAL	405	4,308
1 UNIT DETACHED OR ATTACHED	216	2,660
% OF TOTAL	53%	62%
10 OR MORE UNITS	3	356
% OF TOTAL	1%	8%
OWNER OCCUPIED	105	1,905
% OF TOTAL	26%	44%
RENTER OCCUPIED	268	2,122
% OF TOTAL	66%	49%
VACANT	32	281
% OF TOTAL	8%	7%
MEAN VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	\$84,004.76	\$110,021
MEAN CONTRACT RENT	\$283.15	\$439
TOTAL UNITS W/ > 1 PERSONS PER ROOM	11	129
% OF TOTAL UNITS	3%	3%
RENTAL UNITS W/ > 1 PERSONS PER ROOM	11	97
% OF RENTAL UNITS	4%	5%
PERSONS IN OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	834	8,990
PERSONS PER OCCUPIED UNIT	2.24	2.23
ONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS	132	1,337
% OF OCCUPIED UNITS	35%	15%
FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS, NO SPOUSE PRESENT W/ ONE OR MORE PERSONS < 18 YEARS OF AGE	70	639
% OF OCCUPIED UNITS	19%	16%
TOTAL PERSONS	837	9,372

TABLE 3		
DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD		
CHARACTERISTIC	EAST END	EASTON
WHITE	366	6,741
% OF TOTAL	44%	72%
BLACK	461	2,538
% OF TOTAL	55%	27%
AMERICAN INDIAN, ESKIMO, OR ALEUT	1	33
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	1	23
HISPANIC	6	23
OTHER OR UNCLASSIFIED	2	14
TOTAL < 18 YEARS OF AGE	176	1,974
% OF TOTAL	21%	21%
TOTAL > 65 YEARS OF AGE	130	1,899
% OF TOTAL	16%	20%

Table 3 above (particularly that portion of Table 3 located on the previous page) reveals symptoms of some of the more serious problems facing the East End Neighborhood. One is the percentage of owner-occupied housing in this neighborhood. For the Town as a whole, the percentage of housing that is owner-occupied is slightly less than one-half (44%). For the East End it is only about one in four (26%). The table does not indicate the corresponding County and State figures which indicate that at both these levels approximately two out of three units are owner-occupied. Map 2 reveals that this problem is even more pronounced at a smaller-scale, as some individual blocks have only one or no home-owners present.

A closer look at Table 3 also reveals that those housing units in the East End that are owner-occupied are significantly less valuable than those in the Town as a whole. In fact, the owner-occupied units in the Town are 31% more valuable than those in the East End. The average rent (mean contract rent) is also an astounding 55% higher in the whole Town than in East End. Other contrasts which stand out are the percentage of one person households (much higher in East End) and the racial composition of the neighborhood (much more significantly black in East End).

It is within this setting that the group which produced this Plan proceeded. Over the course of several months, this group reviewed this background material, identified issues of concern for the neighborhood, developed a list of neighborhood needs in a number of areas, and proposed recommended land use changes. The group's recommendations are the subject of the remaining chapters of this Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

Following a review of the various background materials as summarized in the previous chapter, the majority of the planning process was spent in formulating a strategic or action plan for the general improvement of the East End Neighborhood. This process began with a discussion of the inherent strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood. This was followed by the preparation of a list of Neighborhood Threats and Opportunities. That is, what are those issues or aspects of the East End that pose a threat to any plan for improvement and what are the opportunities upon which such a Plan might be based? After a great deal of discussion the following, rather succinct list was developed:

Threats

Deteriorated Properties
Low % of home-ownership
Vacant Commercial Properties
Vacant Lots
Loitering (as opposed to social congregating)
Lack of Quality Housing
Traffic Patterns:

- Flow
- On-street parking
- 1 or 2 way
- Cruising (esp. at late hours)
- Noise (stereos)

Perception of Crime Problem
Fear for Personal/Property Safety
"Slum" Landlords
Un/Under Employment
Perception of Disenfranchisement
Hopelessness

Opportunities

Rails-to Trails (in several ways)
Chance to rally different groups
Positive Public Relations
Vacant lots
People who live here, especially Kids
Location
Walkable Neighborhood
Amenities within walking distance
Historic Buildings
Neighborhood History
Rental Housing Inspection
East End Neighborhood Association

At subsequent meetings, this list of Threats and Opportunities was expanded into a list of neighborhood needs in six different categories. The list which was the result of that exercise is as follows:

Circulation

- o Sidewalks throughout Neighborhood
- o Street lights for safe walking/parking
- o Traffic study of total area re: 1 & 2 ways w/ parking

- o Attractive, Appealing, Safe, Hospitable Places to meet and congregate
- o Increased Police Circulation throughout Neighborhood

Housing

- o Increased Home-Ownership
- o Neighbors helping each other to improve their homes
- o Help provide improvement materials for housing - paint, grass, etc.
- o Fix up classes in Neighborhood
- o Rental Availability List (and Clearinghouse for this Information)
- o Improve Appearance of All Housing

Services

- o Day Care
- o Juvenile Activities
- o Police Sub-Station
- o Hospital/Health Dept. outreach (Blood Pressure, Diabetes info, etc.)
- o ATM (well-lit)
- o Community Center
- o Cooking School
- o Classes of all sorts for all Ages
- o Scouting
- o Identifying/Organizing Volunteers to work w/ Youths
- o "Citizens on Patrol"
- o More Trash Receptacles
- o Non-Credit/GED Courses
- o Public Transportation

Businesses

- o Small Grocery Store
- o Small Cafe/Sweets/Coffee Shop
- o Book Store
- o Old-fashioned 5¢ & 10¢/Sundries Store
- o Video/Computer Store/Music Store
- o Dress Shop (Plus)
- o Young Person's Dress Shop
- o Ice Cream Parlor (Dipped)
- o Bakery

Parks/Open Space

- o Access/Ties to Rails-to-Trail
- o Basketball Park
- o Roller Blade/Skate Board Track
- o Bike Racks/Park Benches/Toilets (esp. for Rail-Trail)
- o Signage of Available Parks/Open Space
- o Enforcement of clean Vacant Lots (i.e. Property Maintenance)

Miscellaneous/Other

- o More Positive News about the Neighborhood
- o Neighborhood Events (like Tree Lighting/Parade, Carnival)

It was with this background that the Neighborhood Action Plan was developed. The action Plan combines the Neighborhood needs and specifies concrete actions that can be taken to achieve that need. These actions are generally simple, but if accomplished should help to satisfy the identified need. The East End Action Plan is as follows:

BUSINESSES

NEED: A wider variety of appropriate, neighborhood-oriented, *desirable* businesses.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Encourage landowners to participate in Easton Business Management Authority's (EBMA) fax-leasing program.
- ➡ Work with EBMA and their leasing agent to identify existing and potential leasable space.
- ➡ Write letters directly from the East End Neighborhood Association to "desirable" businesses located in other communities to see if they might be interested in locating in Easton.
- ➡ Educate landowners about available State/Federal assistance for starting new small businesses, such as the State's Neighborhood Business Development Program.
- ➡ Identify and educate business owners about programs to assist building rehabilitation.

CIRCULATION

NEED: Streetscape Improvements

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Utilize the Town's Forest Conservation Account to retroactively provide street trees.
- ➡ Encourage the Town to continue recent streetscape improvements and expand into the East End.

NEED: A safer neighborhood in which to live and visit.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Encourage businesses to address loitering problems on their property.
- ➡ Start a Neighborhood Watch Program.
- ➡ Require adequate lighting of parking lots.
- ➡ Coordinate street trees and lights to serve intended function.

NEED: A better balance in the pattern of circulation, where practical (i.e. residential vs. commercial intra-town travel needs).

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Initiate a Traffic Study of the East End Neighborhood (include 1 or 2 way travel, parking, traffic calming techniques, etc.).
- ➡ Extend the length of the no parking zones around intersections.
- ➡ Begin a permitted parking program to discourage non-resident, late-night parking, particularly in residential areas.

HOUSING

NEED: Increased Home-ownership.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Educate potential home-owners about such things as the mortgage process, programs available for first-time home buyers, etc.

- ➡ Work with local banks to sponsor seminars concerning how to become a home-owner.
- ➡ Create incentives for landlords to sell properties to tenants.
- ➡ Lobby to change Capital Gains Laws (so that "slum" landlords are less reluctant to sell)

NEED: Rehabilitation of existing homes.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Initiate an Adopt-A-House Program whereby the entire neighborhood works together to rehabilitate an identified house.
- ➡ Work with Home Improvement stores to provide donations or discounts for low-income home-owners to rehabilitate their properties.
- ➡ Work with Habitat-for-Humanity to provide more Habitat homes in the East End Neighborhood.
- ➡ Establish contact and liaison with the Christmas in April Program.

NEED: Improve the quality and appearance of Housing.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Continue to enforce the Rental Housing Inspection Program and Property Maintenance Code.
- ➡ Sponsor workshops on common "Do-It-Yourself" Projects.
- ➡ Have local professionals write a brief article on common home improvement projects and include in the Neighborhood Newsletter.
- ➡ Offer tax incentives to landlords to improve or sell at a discounted price.

SERVICES

NEED: Services which encourage all residents to participate or advance in the work force.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Encourage Home Day Care Operations and/or a Day Care Center to locate within the neighborhood.

- ➡ Work with the Talbot County Board of Education and Chesapeake Community College to provide classes of all sorts, for all ages (including English as Second Language and GED classes).
- ➡ Encourage High Schools to teach classes on how to become a homeowner.
- ➡ Support efforts to establish public transportation in Easton and encourage such efforts to locate routes convenient for East End residents.
- ➡ Encourage the continuation of a strong presence of the Family Support Center in the East End Neighborhood after its move out of the neighborhood to its permanent facility.

NEED: Services that promote "the public health, safety, and general welfare" of the East End Neighborhood.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Encourage the Easton Police Department to establish, and utilize, a substation in the neighborhood through either a permanent facility or a mobile facility which could operate temporarily from vacant store fronts of cooperating landowners.
- ➡ Work with Memorial Hospital and the Talbot County Health Department to establish or enhance neighborhood outreach services (e.g. blood pressure screening, diabetes information, flu shots, etc.).
- ➡ Work with the Easton Police Department to develop programs whereby neighborhood residents can take a more active and effective role in community policing efforts (e.g. "Citizens on Patrol", Neighborhood Watch, etc.).
- ➡ Install adequate storm drains throughout the East End.

NEED: Activities and/or Services for youths.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Form a partnership with local religious, educational, cultural, and service organizations to make a juvenile (or all-age) community center a reality.
- ➡ Contact local scouting leaders about the possibility of either forming a local chapter in the East End neighborhood or developing ways in which neighborhood youths might become more involved in existing scouting programs.
- ➡ Identify and organize volunteers within the neighborhood and the community who are interested in working with youths.

- ➡ Explore the possibility and limitations to reinstituting Big Brothers/Big Sisters in Easton.
- ➡ Solicit community members to participate in mentoring programs in Easton's Elementary Schools.
- ➡ Direct youths to existing activities/programs, such as the YMCA's Scholarship Program.

NEED: Amenities which, while not essential, could help improve various aspects of living in the East End Neighborhood.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Solicit the Town to place more trash receptacles in the neighborhood.
- ➡ Ask a local bank or banks to provide a well-lit Automated Teller Machine (ATM).
- ➡ Issue press releases to local news media to provide more positive news concerning the East End Neighborhood.
- ➡ Develop and promote more neighborhood events (e.g. the Christmas tree-lighting/parade).
- ➡ Encourage appropriate agencies (i.e. Easton Utilities, Bell Atlantic, etc.) to place utilities underground.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

NEED: Better utilization of existing parks.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Work closely with the Town to provide appropriate access and ties with the soon to be developed Rails-to-Trails park.
- ➡ Work with the Park Board and Town officials to insure that the new Rails-to-Trails park will have all the amenities necessary to insure that it does not become a burden rather than asset to the neighborhood (e.g. parking, bicycle racks, park benches, public toilets, etc.).
- ➡ Seek the establishment of effective signage notifying park users of existing amenities.

NEED: A greater variety of recreational amenities.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Work with the Easton Park Board to plan for the establishment of such needed facilities/amenities as basketball courts and a roller-blading/skateboarding park.

NEED: Clean open spaces.

ACTIONS:

- ➡ Enforce the Town's Property Maintenance Code to insure that vacant lots are kept in a clean and safe state.

IMPLEMENTATION

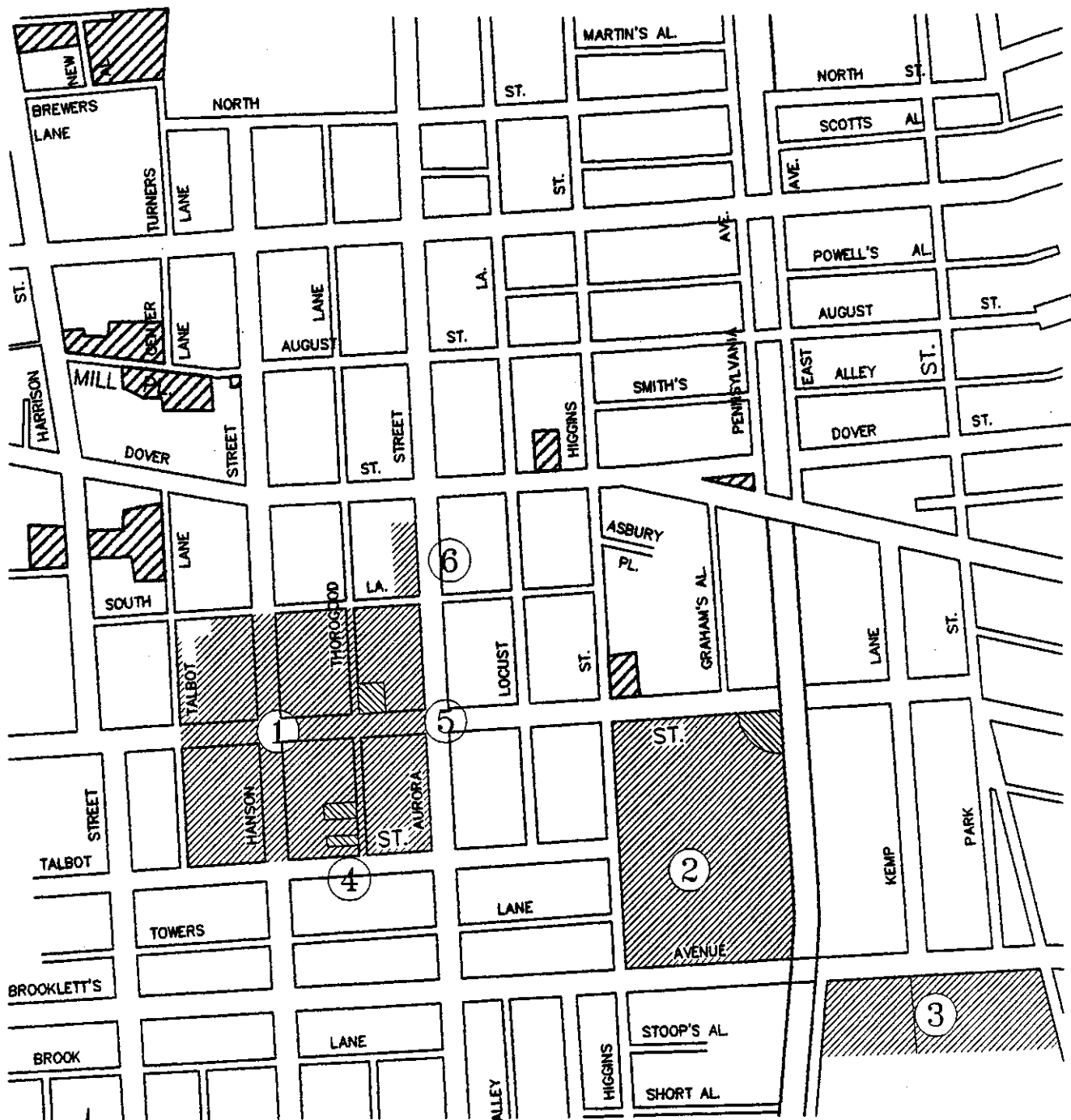
The Final Chapter of this First Neighborhood Plan for Easton will discuss recommended Land Use Changes, the relationship of this Plan to the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and the responsibilities of the various parties entrusted with the implementation of this Plan. It is presented in the hopes that it will better insure the possibility of realizing the Visions for the neighborhood expressed herein, because even the greatest Plans are little more than literary exercises if they are not followed by successful implementation.

SUGGESTED LAND USE CHANGES

After completing the exercises that produced the Action Plan presented in the previous Chapter, the East End Planning Group met to discuss possible Land Use Changes within their neighborhood. With the assistance of the Existing Land Use Map, a Town Zoning Map, aerial photographs, and their own keen knowledge of the inter-workings of the East End, the group developed a few suggestions for changes in the land use pattern of the neighborhood. These are depicted on Map 3.

The boldest suggested Land Use change is the expansion of the Town's Central Business District for two block in a southerly direction as indicated by a "1" on Map 3. The area, bounded by South Lane, Aurora Street, Talbot Street, and Talbot Lane, is presently zoned for residential uses. However, many of the actual uses are commercial in nature (e.g. Talbot County Health Department, Special Office Uses) and the group felt that this was not inappropriate given the proximity to the heart of the downtown or Town Center. The area is not envisioned for intense commercial development, but rather low-impact offices and mixed residential-commercial uses were thought to be in character for this portion of the neighborhood.

The second area suggested for a different land use than now exists is located immediately south of the Town's Graham's Alley project near the intersection of South Street and Graham's Alley. This area is currently zoned for industrial uses, reflective of a time when the property was located adjacent to an active railroad line. However the current land use is predominately residential. The planning group recommends that this area, depicted as "2" on Map 3, be rezoned to a residential classification. Further, the group felt that a portion of the property, specifically the extreme northeastern portion, bounding the Town's new linear park, might be developed in conjunction with this park. The group felt that this area might be an appropriate site for comfort stations (i.e. restrooms, water fountain, etc.) and circuit training. It was felt that without such a facility, the possibility of such undesirable activities as trespassing and public urination might be greater.



TOWN OF EASTON
P.O. BOX 230
EASTON, MD 21821
410-822-2225



PREPARED BY:
EASTON UTILITIES
2300 E. 10TH ST. EASTON, MD 21821

TOWN OF EASTON EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD

PROPOSED LAND USE CHANGES

DESIGN: N/A	SCALE: 1" = 400'	DWG. NO.: 797024
DRAWN: H. LECATES	DATE: 3/21/97	
CHECKED: L. THOMAS	FILE NO.: N/A	SHEET 3 OF 3
APPROVED: T. HAMILTON	APP. DATE: 3/21/97	

CAD DRAWING-DO NOT MAKE MANUAL CHANGES TO THIS DRAWING

The third area, "3" on Map 3, is located diagonally across from area "2" in a southeastward direction. Like the area described above, this parcel too is presently zoned industrially. The group felt that a more appropriate land use arrangement would be for the western portion of this site to be zoned commercially and the eastern portion residentially, possibly to be developed as an extension or future phase of the Charlestown Village Subdivision.

The final recommended land use changes concerned possible park sites. These are indicated as areas "4", "5", and "6" on Map 3. Area "4" is presently Church property. Area "5" is the site of the East End Neighborhood Association's Community Garden. Area "6" is a presently vacant parcel at the corner of South Lane and Aurora Street. The planning group felt these areas might make a nice addition to the Town's Park system and provide different types of much needed recreational space in the East End Neighborhood.

RELATIONSHIP TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

As the East End Neighborhood Plan is one of the first small-area Plans prepared in Easton, a brief discussion about the relationship between this Plan and the Town's Comprehensive Plan seems to be in order. First, the Town's Comprehensive Plan is the overall blueprint for growth and development on a Town-wide basis. It provides a series of Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies. Some of these are fairly specific, but as this document deals with the entire Town, a number of the recommendations are necessarily general in nature. This Plan is much more specific. From the Neighborhood Action Plan presented in Chapter 2, to the recommended Land Use changes described above, this document is able to speak in much more specific terms than the Town's overall Comprehensive Plan.

One potential problem that arises when two separate Plans are created for the same geographic area is the possibility of differing policies or recommendations. In some cases the difference may be explained by the fact that the Neighborhood Plan is simply able to get more specific than the Comprehensive Plan. In those cases the Neighborhood Plan should be the authoritative document. Other issues will require an assessment by the Planning Commission as to which document makes the most sense. The recommended Land Use changes are one such example. While these clearly make sense within the context of the East End Neighborhood, the Planning Commission must weigh that consideration against what makes the most sense, from a land use perspective, on a Town-wide basis.

In the final analysis, any conflict will have to be resolved by the Planning Commission taking this tradeoff between Neighborhood and Town-wide needs into account. It should be remembered, however, that the Small Area Plans are a recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan and as such are essentially an extension of that Plan. Thus, unless there is a clear conflict that is contrary to the larger interest of the Town as a whole, a great deal of consideration should be given to the Neighborhood Plan.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Town's latest Comprehensive Plan contains a brief discussion on Responsibility. This discussion is repeated below with a few revisions to reflect the additional responsibilities associated with this neighborhood-level plan.

In order to ensure that any plan, be it the Comprehensive Plan or this Neighborhood Plan, is consistently followed and implemented in the spirit in which it was prepared, a large number of groups and individuals must take on various responsibilities. First let's start with a discussion of responsibilities shared by all parties.

The Comprehensive Plan should be consulted whenever a decision is to be made relative to growth and land use. In so doing, the proposal should be examined in terms of whether or not it is consistent with the Plan and if not, whether or not there are extenuating or extraordinary circumstances that warrant the support of the proposal despite it's not being consistent with the Plan. Next, the East End Neighborhood should be consulted in the same context. It is entirely possible that the Neighborhood Plan will shed new light on the proposal. It should also be remembered that it is simply not possible to anticipate every scenario that might occur over the next five years. There will undoubtedly be proposals for which neither Plan offers any direction at all. A common mistake is to interpret this as meaning that these Plans do not support the action. This is not necessarily the case. It simply means that those preparing the Plans did not consider the proposal as something that was likely to come up during the plan period (i.e. 1996-2002 in the case of the Comprehensive Plan). In such cases it is essential that those reviewing the proposal do so with the spirit, rather than the letter, of these Plans in mind.

Some responsibilities lie primarily with one group or another. The preparation of budgets and the initiation or modification of Town programs in a manner consistent with these Plans is the responsibility of the Mayor and Town Council. Also, while the Town staff and Planning and Zoning Commission have the responsibility for preparing development-related regulations, the Town Council is the only body authorized to adopt them.

Easton's Planning and Zoning Commission has the primary responsibility for reviewing various development proposals and assessing their level of compliance and consistency with the Plan. This group also is charged with annually preparing a report on the growth and development process and recommending methods by which it might be improved. This offers a continuing opportunity to reassess the progress towards satisfying the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies of the Comprehensive Plan and the degree of success in following the Neighborhood Action Plan.

The Town planning staff has the greatest day-to-day responsibility for implementing the Plan. It is incumbent upon them to inform potential developers early in the process as to how the Comprehensive Plan, and by extension any Neighborhood Plan, views their proposal. The planning staff also should consult these Plans during the review of development proposals and the preparation of staff reports, drafting of Ordinances and Regulations, etc.

Finally, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that this Plan is faithfully and consistently implemented and that it does not simply sit upon the shelf of Town Hall lies with the general public. If you believe in the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Action Plan specified in this document, remind Town officials and staff of them at every opportunity for public comment. Write letters of support for proposals which are consistent with these Plans, rather than showing up only when it is time to oppose something. Encourage Town policies and programs which are consistent with the Plans. Oppose those that are inconsistent (and point out why they are so). Above all else, help the Town Planning and Zoning Commission and their staff stay focused on the Plans by attending the annual Planning meetings and, most especially, by participating in the next update of the Comprehensive Plan beginning in 2001.

APPENDIX 1

EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
LAND USE AND HOUSING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The following report summarizes the efforts of the East End Neighborhood Association's Planning Committee to assess the existing land use and building conditions in the East End and to establish a basis for future action by the East End Neighborhood Association. It includes the results of a land use and structures analysis conducted by the Planning Committee in 1991, a statement of recommended goals and objectives for consideration by the East End Neighborhood Association, and a partial list of implementation recommendations.

The implementation recommendations are a partial list that should be expanded to include the role of the other East End Committee's work, as each of these address neighborhood quality issues that are directly related to land use, housing and business. For example, recommendations may include specific locations or programs for public improvements such as neighborhood parks and other public spaces.

The purpose of the report is to provide a basis for formulation of East End housing and land use policies and to establish a basis for future evaluation private and public development proposals and regulatory provisions.

LAND USE

The East End Neighborhood contains approximately 115 acres of land and is shown on Map 1. Land use and housing are key physical components of the neighborhood that directly impact every resident and merchant. These two characteristics are key factors in the quality of the living environment in the East End neighborhood. One of the major objectives of the Town is to preserve and improve the stability and property values of its residential neighborhoods. As such, housing and neighborhood improvement ranks as an important local concern. Planning for and implementing programs to insure that the quality of the neighborhood is maintained at the highest possible level is a responsibility of the public sector, but is one also shared by the residents.

The East End Association believes that the residents also have a responsibility to do what they can to maintain and improve the quality of the neighborhood. To this end, the East End Association as a representative non-profit neighborhood organization in the East End, has undertaken this planning effort to develop a focus for public and private actions to improve the physical quality of the neighborhood.

Clearly single-family residential is the predominant land use in the East End. The housing mix includes older single-family units converted to apartments and multi-family units that have been constructed over the last decade indicating an increasing amount of renter-occupation. Recent renovation of some older homes as multi-family condominiums may presage a new trend in conversions from renter to owner occupied units.

The majority of the housing stock in East End is at least 40 years old and many are much older. Most of the units in disrepair are rental units (typically older single-family homes which have been converted into apartments). Units in need of repair are scattered throughout neighborhood.

Deteriorating housing has a blighting influence on adjacent homes and neighborhoods which results in lower property values and a deterioration of neighborhood stability. Major physical factors affecting the stability of the neighborhood include:

- location in relationship to adjacent land uses (industrial, commercial, institutional, residential);
- the age and condition of the neighborhood's houses;
- the function and condition of roads and streets in the neighborhood;
- the condition of the neighborhood's utility systems (e.g. water, sewer, storm drainage, electricity, gas, solid waste);
- the presence or lack of improvements and amenities such as curb and gutter, stormwater drainage, sidewalks, street lighting, trees and landscaping; and
- the presence or lack of community open spaces, natural areas, parks and playgrounds.

Land Use Goals

The Land Use goals of the of the East End Neighborhood Association parallel those of the Town of Easton. They are:

Promote the development of a community with economic vitality, attractive neighborhoods, excellent facilities for education and recreation, and environmental factors which will help all residents to enjoy their desired quality of life.

Preserve and improve the stability of neighborhood.

Ensure that there are adequate areas and amounts of parks and open space located throughout the neighborhood which are beneficial to all residents.

Ensure the continued adequate maintenance and expansion of community facilities and public services necessary to guarantee public health, safety and welfare and enhance residents quality of life.

Maintain a viable economy which encourages further investment diversification and expansion to offer a broad range of employment and business opportunities responsive to citizen needs.

Land Use Objectives

The Land Use objectives of the East End Association are as follows:

Protect and preserve the neighborhood from encroachment of incompatible land uses and activities.

Create a more functional, smaller-scale park and open space areas throughout the neighborhood.

Ensure that community facilities and public services are provided equitably to all neighborhood residents.

Maximize the safety and efficiency of the existing street and highway system.

Increase employment opportunities for neighborhood residents.

HOUSING

The quality of East End Neighborhood is determined by the quality of the housing stock and living environment. Since major Neighborhood goals are to improve the quality of life and to promote the availability and affordability of decent, safe, and sanitary housing for all residents, housing ranks as an important concern for the East End Association.

Important factors to be considered in forming policy towards the public function of housing are:

- Housing is a durable, physical product in a neighborhood setting.
- Housing is a major influence on the neighborhood's physical and social environment.
- Housing is a major investment or expenditure for individual families.
- Housing is a major investment for the private financial community.
- Housing is a major ingredient in family satisfaction or dissatisfaction and in a community's sense of well-being.

Housing Goals and Objectives

The following are the East End Neighborhood's goals, objectives and policies for housing:

GOAL: Encourage development of safe, decent, and sanitary housing in a variety of housing types, suitably located to permit good access and proximity to services, jobs, and cultural amenities, in order to assure a wide possibility of choice to meet the housing needs of all economic segments in the Neighborhood.

Housing Objectives and Policy

Objective: *Preserve housing in good condition from replacement by other uses or public facilities unless a greater public need would be served by such action.*

Objective: *Provide increased housing where possible for small families, including the elderly, semi-retired, and other families with no children.*

Objective: *Encourage continued maintenance and upkeep of existing housing and stimulate the replacement of housing that becomes unfit for human habitation.*

Objective: *Protect residential zones from incompatible activities and land uses to create comfortable and safe living environments.*

Objective: *Provide a balanced housing stock with housing opportunities for all neighborhood residents.*

Policy: The East End Neighborhood Association encourage the use of innovative programs to provide a suitable mix of housing types in affordable price ranges.

Objective: *Improve housing conditions for all the neighborhoods residents, especially the disadvantaged population.*

Policy: The East End Association will actively encourage, through both private and public actions, the renovation or removal of substandard housing.

Policy: The East End Association endorses the vigorous application of housing and building codes to insure high standards of quality in new construction, but with sensitivity to housing affordability.

Policy: The East End Association encourages both private and public actions that will increase the opportunity for families to live in adequate homes in price ranges that are affordable.

Policy: The East End Association encourages the Town to utilize Federal and state programs where appropriate to help meet the Neighborhood's housing needs (particularly those of the lower income citizens).

RESULTS OF THE EAST END LAND USE AND HOUSING ANALYSIS

It is the intent of the East End Neighborhood Association to establish an official East End Neighborhood policy position on housing and land use within the neighborhood. To this end, during the summer and fall of 1991 members of the East End Association conducted a survey of land use and building and housing conditions within the East End area.

The survey categorized neighborhood into seven basic categories of land use. The categories were:

- Single Residential (primarily detached units)
- Two Family Residential (duplexes)
- Multi-Family Residential (apartments)
- Commercial/Business (retail, wholesale, services)
- Industrial (manufacturing, warehousing, other)
- Public (government)
- Park/Open Space (includes vacant land)
- Streets and Right-of Ways (does not include railroad row from North Street to Dover Road)

The results of the land use survey are summarized on Map 2 and Table 1. As can be seen, with the exception of street and other rights-of-way residential is the dominant land use. Overall Residential uses constitute fully of third of the Neighborhood. Single family residential, which represents over 76 percent of the residential, is the primary residential land use type. Over a quarter of the land in the neighborhood is in residential use.

Commercial/business and industrial land uses make up 19 percent of the neighborhood. In these two non-residential land use categories, the Commercial/Business classification is 84 percent of the land use. Although Commercial/Business uses are scattered throughout the neighborhood, they are predominantly concentrated in along Dover Road and Aurora Street. Industrial uses are primarily located along the southern edge of the East End, on Brooklets Avenue.

EXISTING LAND USE BREAKDOWN EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD		
LAND USE	ACRES	PERCENT
RESIDENTIAL		
Detached Single Family	30	26%
Duplex	5	5%
Multi-family	4	3%
Total	39	34%
NONRESIDENTIAL		
Commercial/Business	19	16%
Industrial	3	3%
Public	4	4%
Open Space/Vacant	8	7%
Roads/ROWS	41	36%
Total	115	100%

Building Conditions Survey

The Neighborhood was surveyed for the purpose of determining building (residential and non-residential buildings) structural condition. The results of this survey are summarized on Map 2 and Table 2. Three categories of condition were used for the survey: 1) sound; 2) deteriorating; 3) dilapidated; and 4) abandoned. Units rated as "deteriorating" are those units that need of repairs, primarily cosmetic, but are otherwise habitable. Units classified as "dilapidated" give exterior indication of potential substandard living units. Abandoned units that are not fit for habitation and are not occupied.

As can be seen from Map 3, a significant portion of the housing units in the neighborhood are evidencing deterioration. Units in need of repair were generally scattered throughout the neighborhood, with a concentration of units classified as deteriorated or dilapidated located in the area shown on Map 4.

Nonresidential structures constitute approximately 16 percent of all structures in the East End (see Table 2). For the most part, nonresidential structures have been maintained in better condition.

The primary issues associated with these structures vary depending on the type of land use. In the case of business and commercial uses, the issue is retention of existing businesses and commercial services both as an employment base and for the services they provide the residents of the community. In the case of industrial structures and land uses the issue is redevelopment of obsolete industrial sites, e.g., the grain station. In this latter case the neighborhood residents are concerned about the types of land uses that could be placed on these properties. Incompatible industrial uses should be discouraged. Compatible business, commercial or residential uses may be appropriate.

BUILDING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD		
CONDITION ANALYSIS	RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS	NONRESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS
TOTAL STRUCTURES	315	60
SOUND	206	50
DETERIORATING	85	8
DILAPIDATED*	24	2
BREAKDOWN (PERCENT)		
SOUND	65%	83%
DETERIORATING	27%	13%
DILAPIDATED	8%	3%

*In the case of nonresidential structures the classification is vacant

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work closely with the Town of Easton to encourage improvement of blighted housing.

The East End Association should be a working partner with the Town in programs designed to improve the quality of housing stock in the East End. This includes programs ranging from urban renewal projects to enforcement of existing housing, building and livability codes. Public efforts should be focused on bringing resources (financial and other resources) to bear on identified housing problems.

- Support efforts of the private sector to redevelop blighted areas with compatible new housing.

The key consideration for private sector investment in housing in the East End is profitability. Numerous factors affect profitability including zoning regulations (density and design standards), neighborhood stability (structural and social conditions), and amenities, e.g., park and recreation facilities, cultural offerings, etc. These factors are of concern to the East End Association and are addressed through many of the current programs of the East End Association.

- Review and comment on proposed zoning changes that may effect the East End.